

## ABSTRACT

~~It is an object of the present invention to provide an elongated object measurement apparatus capable of measuring the length or quantity of elongated objects such as drugs arranged in a row, regardless of their size or type.~~

~~—One end of the elongated object is positioned with a first reference member and the other end thereof is positioned with a second reference member. The apparatus comprises a resistance circuit constituted by a plurality of resistors connected in series, wherein the resistor at one end is connected to a constant voltage source and the resistor at the other end is connected to the ground, a detection circuit comprising a plurality of switches disposed with uniform spacing along the elongated object and having one end thereof connected between the adjacent resistors and the other end thereof connected to a detection terminal, and a switch drive unit provided at the second reference member and turning the switches on. The voltage at the detection terminal of the detection circuit is measured and the length or quantity of the elongated material is computed based on the voltage.~~A drug dispensing apparatus including a cassette for containing drugs in an aligned state, a rotor disposed at one open end of the cassette, a pushing unit for pushing the drugs toward the rotor, a drive mechanism for pivoting the rotor alternately between a dispensing position and a receiving position by operating a drive switch to dispense the drugs one-by-one, and a measuring unit for measuring the present quantity of the drugs in the cassette. The apparatus also includes a memory unit for storing a stock quantity  $N_0$  of the drugs in the cassette. When the rotor is returned to the receiving position from the dispensing position, the present quantity  $N$  measured by the measuring unit is compared with the stock quantity  $N_0$  stored in the memory unit. If the present quantity  $N$  is less than the stock quantity  $N_0$ , the present quantity  $N$  is stored in the memory unit as a

stock quantity  $N_0$ , while if the present quantity  $N$  is same as the stock quantity  $N_0$ , it is informed that the drug has not been taken out.

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A drug dispensing apparatus including a cassette for containing drugs in an aligned state, a rotor disposed at one open end of the cassette, a pushing unit for pushing the drugs toward the rotor, a drive mechanism for pivoting the rotor alternately between a dispensing position and a receiving position by operating a drive switch to dispense the drugs one-by-one, and a measuring unit for measuring the present quantity of the drugs in the cassette. The apparatus also includes a memory unit for storing a stock quantity  $N_0$  of the drugs in the cassette. When the rotor is returned to the receiving position from the dispensing position, the present quantity  $N$  measured by the measuring unit is compared with the stock quantity  $N_0$  stored in the memory unit. If the present quantity  $N$  is less than the stock quantity  $N_0$ , the present quantity  $N$  is stored in the memory unit as a stock quantity  $N_0$ , while if the present quantity  $N$  is same as the stock quantity  $N_0$ , it is informed that the drug has not been taken out.